



Senator Donzella James

Senate District 35



Georgia State Senator Donzella James (RET) has been a major force for positive change. Her commitment to family values and the salvation of Georgia's children has been exemplary. She was first elected to the State Senate in 1993 to fill the 35th District's unexpired term of the late Senator Arthur Langford. Once sworn in, she went on to proudly serve four terms. Here again, Senator James was elected to fill the unexpired term of the former Senator Kasim Reed, after he resigned the 35th District seat run for a mayoral seat in the City of Atlanta.

Senator Donzella James is a distinguished and experienced lawmaker with documented accomplishments within the community. Her strong legislative track record in the political arena for community empowerment has earned her the distinction of being one of the best state senators in Georgia's history. She is a native of Atlanta who attended Morris Brown College and received an honorary Doctor of Humanities from Macon's Emmanuel Bible College. Senator James is a retired federal employee with dedicated service as a member of the National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees; who has also taught in the Atlanta Public Schools for more than a decade.

Senator and Mr. Elmo James have been married for more than 35 years. They are proud parents of two sons, Brian James and the late Kerry James; daughter-in-law Cheryl Renee; and three grandchildren, Kerri, Ryan, and Bryce.

Her track record entails being Chair of the Interstate Cooperation Committee; Vice Chair of State and Local Government Operations; member of the Appropriations and Agriculture Committee; Vice Chair of the Veterans and Consumer Affairs Committee; Secretary of Technology Committee; Chair of the Senate Recycling and Economic Development Study Committee; Secretary of the Youth, Aging and Human Ecology Committee; four years on the Ethics Committee; and a member of the Policy Committee of the Senate Democratic Caucus, just to name a few.

Senator James fought for reductions in crime; stronger anti-DUI and drug trafficking laws; economic development; tougher environmental protection regulations; recycling; better access to health care; and improved education to include higher teacher salaries and lower student-

teacher ratios. She authored the child endangerment bill and the Child Sexual Commerce Act of 2001, Teenager Responsibility Act, and habitual drunk-driving laws.

Throughout her tenure she has both sponsored and co-sponsored countless legislation. She sponsored a bill to prohibit the construction of racetracks in residential neighborhoods, and promoted the construction of multi-retail outlets (Camp Creek Market Place) now responsible for local economic development and career opportunities for our citizens. As a successful entrepreneur she understands the importance of fair and equitable business opportunity; therefore she authored legislation to support small business by mandating that all bids for Georgia state service and supply contracts be posted on-line to enforce fair access and consideration for business. In 1994, Senator James was elected to represent the State of Georgia as a Fleming Fellow for the National Center for Public Policy. In 2000, she received the prestigious honor of the JFK Profiles in Courage honorable mention award for authoring and introducing the acclaimed “Zero Waste By 2020” legislation which went on to be adopted in six other states. Donzella James was the 1999 recipient of the Eleanor Roosevelt Fellowship at the National Center for Policy Alternatives.

As a recipient of the freshman of the Year Legislator award in 1994, and awarded Legislator of the Year in 1997 & 2000, she went on to pass over 270 legislative bills. Senator James authored legislation to create the Senate Eviction Law Study Committee which examined current eviction procedures with an eye toward making them less disruptive. She chaired the Senate Study Committee on Solid Waste Reduction; and received honors by both the Georgia Municipal Association and the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia with their Legislative Service Awards. The National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees and the Georgia Highway Safety Management System have also cited her for her legislative leadership.

As a leader in community affairs, and Chairperson of “Keep South Fulton Beautiful”, Senator James has been a delegate of three national Democratic conventions. She was a member of South Fulton’s Vision 2000; the Atlanta Women’s Political Caucus; the National Political Congress of Black Women; the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women; and the chairperson of the Education Committee, Tri-Cities cluster of the Atlanta Project. Senator James was elected and served from 1994 to 2002 as Editor and Assistant Secretary to the Georgia Association of Black elected officials (GABEO). She also served as National Secretary and Executive Board member of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) from 1997 to 2002. Senator James has traveled the world as an Ambassador for Peace. She has consulted directly with diplomats, kings, prime ministers and presidents of many nations. Senator James currently co-hosts a weekly show called “Radio Haitian Voice International” a multi-lingual community outreach radio and internet program, broadcasted Saturdays and Sundays in Atlanta, Georgia.

She has been co-founder and chairperson of the Task Force for Good Government; served on the Benjamin E. Mays High School Advisory Council; and the Board of Directors Advisory Committee of the Atlanta Job Corporation. She also serves on several boards to include Tapestry Ministry for unwed teen mothers; Georgia soccer association; and the Atlanta Technology Institute.

Senator James has been a steadfast advocate for middle-class families, working to help create jobs, expand children's health care and protect Social Security from privatization. She is strongly committed to making sure that every citizen of Georgia has the right to vote in fair, accessible credible elections. She fought the Attorney General to ensure better protection of votes and to ensure that every vote is counted.

Senator James has proven to be committed to the people, shown fiscal responsibility, and is a woman of faith.